

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY East Germany

SUBJECT Autobahn Bridge over the Elbe on the
Berlin-Helmstedt Autobahn Route

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1. Construction work on the Berlin-Magdeburg Autobahn bridge over the Elbe river is proceeding; about 300 workers are employed on the project. The contracting firms are Abus Stahlbau WER, Leipzig, and Bau Union Magdeburg. Workers are quartered in temporary barracks which have been built on the Autobahn; some live in surrounding villages. A part of the laboring force is brought from Magdeburg in trucks. The workers are busy on both east and west banks of the Elbe.
2. Currently the construction crew is cutting up the old steel pieces of the bridge and sorting them out. On the left bank of the river, two large pieces of steel construction lie broken; these are being cut up. On the right bank of the river, the crew is ready to begin new iron construction, and excavation for the first concrete pier is already under way.
3. The reconstruction of the bridge is behind schedule. The project is part of the DDR Five-Year-Plan. One thousand workers were planned for the rebuilding, but are not employed for lack of funds. It is for this reason that to date only the preparatory work has been accomplished. It is planned to add a large number of new workers, however, so that the project should be finished at the latest in 1953. Many workers who were originally scheduled to work on the Elbe bridge were shifted in the spring of 1952 to the construction of a by-pass bridge in Magdeburg. The Magdeburg project is to be finished in late July or early August 1952.
4. Most of the bridge is being built piecemeal by an unnamed firm. The plan is so devised that to complete the project it will only be necessary to assemble the pieces on the spot.
5. In general, the new bridge will not differ from the old.

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